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Personal Privacy Protection Act passes Senate

LANSING – Michigan residents are closer to having greater protections placed on their privacy under legislation passed today by the Michigan Senate, said Sen. Ron Jelinek, R-Three Oaks.

“As technology changes so must our laws,” Jelinek said. “This bill will help Michigan residents keep their privacy from being violated. Video voyeurism is a growing problem and it needs to be stopped.”

Senate Bill 918 creates specific prohibitions and criminal penalties for acts of electronic voyeurism. Those acts include capturing or transmitting a visual image of a person undressed or wearing only undergarments. Examples of circumstances or places where one might normally have such an expectation are private or public restrooms, showers, tanning beds and locker rooms.

Recent testimony before the Senate Judiciary Committee was compelling and emotional in its support of the legislation. One victim spoke of the emotional and psychological devastation that was wrought as a result of being covertly taped while in a restroom and dressing area of a private residence. A representative of the Michigan Association of Prosecuting Attorneys also testified to the need for more up-to-date statutes and stiffer penalties in order to deter and punish perpetrators.

The bill also prohibits and creates stronger penalties for distributing such images, and provides stronger penalties for repeat offenders.

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